



Navy & Marine Corps Public Health Center “Quick Hits”



September 2012

Suicide Prevention

Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the United States of America. Since 2010, suicide has been the second leading cause of death among U.S. service members, exceeded only by war injury. During the calendar year 2011, the U.S. Navy tragically lost 59 Sailors to suicide.* It affects everyone. Men are about four times more likely than women to die from suicide, however, women are three times more likely to make a suicide attempt.

Several factors may place a person at risk for suicide. The risk factors include previous suicide attempts, a history of depression or other psychological health problems, alcohol/drug abuse or misuse, and a family history of violence or suicide. However, having these risk factors does not always mean that suicide will occur.

* Navy Personnel Command. (2012) Statistics. Retrieved from Navy Personnel Command (2012). Statistics. Retrieved from http://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/support/suicide_prevention/Pages/Statistics.aspx

Acute Warning Signs That May Precede a Suicide Attempt

- ▶ **IDEATION**- Thoughts of suicide expressed, threatened, written or otherwise hinted at by efforts to find means to suicide
- ▶ **SUBSTANCE ABUSE**- Increase or excessive alcohol or drug use
- ▶ **PURPOSELESSNESS**- Seeing no reason for living or having no sense of meaning or purpose in life
- ▶ **ANXIETY**- Feeling anxious, agitated, or unable to sleep (or sleeping all the time)
- ▶ **TRAPPED**- Feeling like there is no way out
- ▶ **HOPELESSNESS**- Feeling hopeless about self, others, and the future
- ▶ **WITHDRAWAL**- Isolating from family, friends, usual activities, society
- ▶ **ANGER**- Feeling rage or uncontrolled anger, seeking revenge for perceived wrongs
- ▶ **RECKLESSNESS**- Acting without regard for consequences, excessively risky behaviors, seemingly without thinking
- ▶ **MOOD CHANGES**- Experiencing dramatic changes in mood

Take all talk about suicide very seriously! Know the risk factors and warning signs of suicide. Tell your shipmate, friend, or family member that you are worried, concerned and care about them. Seek professional assistance immediately or call 911. **NEVER LEAVE A PERSON WHO IS SUICIDAL ALONE!**

Helping Resources:

1. Medical and Mental Health
2. Chaplains and the Fleet and Family Support Center
3. Lifeline (1-800-273-TALK)



POC and Links

- NMCPHC Homepage: <http://www.nmcphc.med.navy.mil/>
- Navy Suicide Prevention Program: http://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/support/suicide_prevention/Pages/default.aspx
- NMCPHC Suicide Prevention Resources: http://www.nmcphc.med.navy.mil/Healthy_Living/Psychological_Health/Suicide_Prevention/
- Navy Leader's Guide for Managing Sailors in Distress: <http://www.nmcphc.med.navy.mil/LGuide/>
- USMC Suicide Prevention Program: <http://www.usmc-mccs.org/suicideprevent/>

